

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BRUSSE 04736 281532Z

51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 090479

O 281445Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4023

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 04736

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SEC AF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MASS, BE

SUBJECT: BELGIAN GOVERNMENT NEARS DECISION ON LWF BUY

SUMMARY. TINDEMANS CHEF DE CABINET SAYS PRIME MINISTER HAS OPTED FOR F-16 AND ONLY LAST-MINUTE TIDYING UP OF THE BELGIAN POLITICAL SCENE STANDS IN WAY OF ANNOUNCEMENT. FORMAL DECISION FOR F-16 IS POSSIBLE AT MAY 30 CABINET MEETING. INFORMANT SAYS TINDEMANS COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPEMENT OF COORDINATED EUROPEAN ARMAMEMENTS INDUSTRY IS FIRM, QUITE APART FROM LWF ACQUISITION DECISION, AND THAT HE WILL EXPLAIN HIS PHILOSOPHY TO THE PRESIDENT WHEN THEY MEET. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIMIN TINDEMANS CHEF DE CABINET (GRAULS) REVIEWED FOR US TODAY THE STATE OF PLAY ON F-104 REPLACEMENT DECISION IN FOLLOWING TERMS. HE SAID TINEMANS HAD DECIDED THAT ONLY POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO REPLACEMENT PROBLEM WAS ACQUISITION OF F-16. PRIME MINISTER WAS NOW GOING THROUGH A "DELICATE" PROCESS OF MAKING THE F-16 DECISION AS PALATABLE AS POSSIBLE FOR THE PRO-MIRAGE FRANCOPHONE ELEMENTS IN BELGIUM. TINDEMANS TACTICS WERE TO SHOW BEYOND QUESTION THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE HAD BEEN DONE TO ACHIEVE A EUROPEAN SOLUTION TO THE REPLACEMENT QUESTION. MOREOVER, HE WAS EMPHASIZING THAT THE AMERICAN BUY IN THIS CASE DID NOT DEGRADE BELGIUM'S

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BRUSSE 04736 281532Z

SINCERE COMMITMENT TO PRESERVE A EUROPEAN AIRCRAFT

INDUSTRY AND TO PROMOTE A VIABLE EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS
INDUSTRY.

2. GRAULS SAID THE DUTCH ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO
ACQUIRE THE F-16 MADE IT "UMCH EASIER" FOR TINDEMANS
TO SHOW THE MIRAGE CAUSE WAS HOPELESS. SPEAKING AS IF
HE WERE QUOTING TINDEMANS, GRAULS SAID, " IF BELGIUM
SAID TO FRANCE WE WOULD BUY THE MIRAGE ALONE, THEY WOULD
HAVE TO SAY NO- THEY COULD NOT STAND THE COSTS."

3. TURNING TO THE PROCESS OF REACHING A DECISION,
GRAULS SAID DEFMIN VANDEN BOEYNANTS HAD ACQUAINTED
THE CABINET WITH "THE FAILURE" OF THE OFFSET AGREEMENT
MADE BY THE U.S. IN THE LOCKHEED C-130 SALE TO BELGIUM
AND HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED TO INSIST ON AN IRONCLAD OFFSET
ARRANGEMENT ON THE F-16.
GRAULS SAID TINDEMANS HAD NOT YET INFORMED HIM WHETHER HE
WOULD ASK CABINET AT SCHEDULED MAY 30 MEETING TO TAKE FORMAL
DECISION TO ACQUIRE F-16.

4. GRAULS SAID HE EXPECTED TINDEMANS WOULD INFORM
PRESIDENT OF THINKING WHICH WENT INTO BELGIAN
ACTIONS ON F-104 REPLACEMENT, NOT TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS
BUT POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY WHICH UNDERLAY HIS MOVES.
IN THAT CONNECTION GRAULS STRESSED THAT (1) TINDEMANS
IS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE PROMOTION OF A COORDINATED
EUROPE-WIDE ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY, (2) THAT THE IDEAS
PROPOUNDED BY FORMINISTER VAN ELSLANDE AT WEU REPRESENT
CONSIDERED GOB POLICY WHICH WILL STAND AFTR LWF DECISION
IS MADE, AND (3) TINDEMANS EXPECTS THEM TO BE
INCORPORATED -PERHAPS IN REFINED FORM - IN HIS "WISE
MAN" REPORT TO EC LATER THIS YEAR. FIRESTONE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEE.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT, AIRCRAFT SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: woolflhd
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BRUSSE04736
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750186-0451
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750510/aaaaajam.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <24 DEC 2003 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BELGIAN GOVERNMENT NEARS DECISION ON LWF BUY SUMMARY. TINDEMANS CHEF DE CABINET SAYS PRIME MINISTER
TAGS: MASS, BE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006